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Hernando DeSoto and the Indians of Florida, by Jerald T. Milanich and Charles Hudson

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Amerindian societies, both past and present, do not come within his purview; for all his well-honed historical skills, he does not succeed in creating a living Amerindian presence in his historical writing. This is less a criticism of Axtell's work than it is an acknowledgement of the complexity of the task of incorporating the Amerindian "other" into the American historical persona. Yet, as Axtell himself so readily acknowledges, it is a step that must be taken if America is to fully incorporate the richness of its ancient pre-colonial past as well as its Amerindian present into its historical image.

Axtell's wide-ranging approach leaves him open to quibbles about details. Some examples: "Iroquois" does not appear to have been what those people originally called themselves, although the term appeared early in the French (but not at first in the English) literature (p. 33); indigenous women as well as men were taken to Europe to act as go-betweens (for one of the better-known examples, the Inuk Mikak, sent to London in 1769) (p. 71); if the French only allowed Christianized reserve Amerindians to acquire guns, then what is the explanation for the well-armed, pre-reserve, and at first largely non-Christianized Abenaki who fought so well in the French cause (p. 108)? Such slips aside, these essays, in their thought-provoking analyses of accepted contact history, point the way toward the next stage in early American history, when Amerindians will have become full partners.

University of Alberta

OLIVE PATRICIA DICKASON

Hernando de Soto and the Indians of Florida. By Jerald T. Milanich and Charles Hudson. (Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 1993. xv + 292 pp. \$34.95)

Jerald Milanich and Charles Hudson, noted anthropologists of Native Americans in the southeastern United States, eschew moral judgments of the explorer Hernando de Soto in their search to better understand the indigenous peoples of the Florida peninsula at the time of European contact. Since the 1930s, scholars, such as John Swanton, have recognized the archaeological and ethnographical value of the DeSoto narratives, yet only in the last generation has the physical evidence been excavated to enable a more exact reconstruction of the route of the Spanish explorer. This excellent collaborative work incorporates new translations of the DeSoto narratives with the latest archaeological research to more

precisely define the explorer's path in order to generate a "picture of the social geography of sixteenth-century Florida" (p. 187).

Through painstaking and prudent analysis of multiple sources, the authors strive to locate and identify the societies of the contact-era Florida Indians, a task made difficult by subsequent demographic disaster and military forays which annihilated or greatly transformed the indigenous cultures by the eighteenth-century. The judicious reconstruction of the DeSoto route fosters an understanding of sixteenth-century Florida societies, particularly the nature of settlement patterns and the resulting boundaries of local cultures, the levels of social and political complexity, and the cultural relationship among the various groups. In the process, the authors have established a more accurate and comprehensive baseline to examine the effect of Spanish and English settlement in the region. As a result, the Florida peninsula becomes fertile territory to study the multifarious impact of European colonialism on indigenous groups.

Despite claims to the contrary, the authors do not successfully place the DeSoto expedition and aftermath in a fully developed historical context, a shortcoming that is more serious for the general reader who might lack such an understanding. A broader perspective would have provided additional meaning to the site-specific focus of the book and would have rendered a more balanced treatment of historical and anthropological themes. A note on the edition itself. The University Press of Florida should be commended for including an abundance of graphics to assist in the analysis of historic maps and artifacts, but the poor quality of reproduction compromises the noble intent.

All in all, Milanich and Hudson have produced one of the more worthwhile endeavors to come out of the Quincentenary. Compared to many other related enterprises, theirs has a lasting value for both the scholarly community and the general public.

University of South Carolina

MICHAEL C. SCARDAVILLE

Bitter Feast: Amerindians and Europeans in Northeastern North America, 1600–64. By Denys Delage. Translated by Jane Brierley. (Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1993. xi + 399 pp. \$60 cloth, \$29.95 paper)

Because of its range of subject matter, this very good book is hard to review in a short space, and much must be omitted.